WHAT IS CLAIMED

1. A cutting tool for severing webbing layer that covers and attaches a lid to the outer sidewall of a cylindrical container of the type used for the storage of particulate matter, said cutting tool comprising a generally arcuate-shaped top portion and a curvilinear band portion extending therefrom, so as to generally conform with and readily placable against said lid of said container, said band portion including a web-severing cutting element that is shaped and sized to penetrate through and sever said webbing layer, as said cutting tool is rotated around said container lid.

2. The cutting tool according to claim 1, wherein said web-severing cutting element comprises a generally cord-configured cutting edge that is generally parallel to said generally arcuate-shaped top portion of said cutting tool.

3. The cutting tool according to claim 2, wherein said generally arcuate-shaped top portion includes a tab portion that is adapted to allow a user of said cutting tool to rotate said cutting tool around said container lid.

4. The cutting tool according to claim 1, wherein vertical spacing between said web-severing cutting element and the top portion of said cutting tool is adjustable.

5. A cutting tool for severing a webbing layer that covers and attaches a container lid to an outer sidewall of a cylindrical container of the type used for the storage of tobacco and the like, said cutting tool comprising a generally arcuate-shaped top portion that terminates at an outer edge portion, a generally curvilinearly shaped band segment extending generally perpendicularly from said outer edge portion of said top portion of said tool, said arcuate-shaped top portion and said band segment being sized to be placed against and generally fit against said container, such that said top portion may rest against said container lid, while said band segment engages said outer cylindrical sidewall of said container lid, a cutting edge that projects from interior surface portion of said band segment so as to be generally parallel to said top portion of said tool, said cutting edge being configured as a semi-dull edge, that is sufficiently sharp to penetrate through and sever said webbing layer when urged against and across its surface, but is generally insufficiently sharp to cut human skin, and wherein said cutting edge is spaced from said top portion of said tool by a prescribed distance that effectively places said cutting edge immediately adjacent to said lid within a generally central annular space portion of said container where said lid does not extend, such that, when said top portion of the tool is placed against said lid, said top portion of said tool acts as a guide and

locates said band segment adjacent to said outer cylindrical sidewall of said lid, and allows said cutting edge to be urged against and sever that portion of said webbing material covering said annular space that is proximate to the edge of said container lid.

6. The cutting tool according to claim 5, wherein said cutting edge comprises a generally cord-configured cutting edge.

7. The cutting tool according to claim 6, wherein said generally arcuate-shaped top portion includes a tab portion that is adapted to allow a user of said cutting tool to rotate said cutting tool around said container lid, such that a generally circular, sliding or twisting motion of said tool around the cylindrical sidewall of said container, by means of said tab portion, will cause said cutting edge to traverse a generally circular cutting path through said webbing material, and penetrate into said annular space, thereby severing said webbing layer into upper and lower segments, so that said user may remove said and gain access to the contents of said container.

8. The cutting tool according to claim 5, wherein vertical spacing between said cutting edge and the top portion of said cutting tool is adjustable.

9. A method of severing webbing layer that covers

and attaches a lid to the outer sidewall of a cylindrical container of the type used for the storage of particulate tobacco material and the like, comprising the steps of:

(a) providing a cutting tool having a generally arcuate-shaped top portion and a curvilinear band portion extending therefrom, so as to generally conform with and readily placable against said lid of said container, said band portion including a web-severing cutting edge that is shaped and sized to penetrate through and sever said webbing layer, as said cutting tool is rotated around said container lid;

(b) placing said top portion of said tool against said lid, so that said top portion of said tool acts as a guide and locates said band segment adjacent to said outer cylindrical sidewall of said lid, and allows said cutting edge to be urged against and sever that portion of said webbing material covering an annular space that is proximate to the edge of said container lid; and

(c) rotating said tool around said lid so as to cause said cutting edge to sever that portion of said webbing material covering said annular space proximate to the edge of said container lid.

10. The method according to claim 9, wherein said web-severing cutting element comprises a generally cord-configured cutting edge that is generally parallel to said generally arcuate-shaped top portion of said cutting tool.

11. The method according to claim 10, wherein said generally arcuate-shaped top portion includes a tab portion that is adapted to allow a user of said cutting tool to rotate said cutting tool around said container lid during execution of step (c).

12. The method according to claim 9, wherein vertical spacing between said cutting edge and the top portion of said cutting tool is adjustable.